“He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside still waters...he refreshes my soul.”
Psalm 23.3-4

Still Waters is the weekend edition of our weekday Green Pastures devotions. Well, sort of. Rather than reading (or hearing) a passage of Scripture followed by Pastor Mike’s reflections along with a question to ponder and a responsive prayer, you’re invited to take about a half hour or so, to dial down, to breathe, and to listen to Kim and Mike each read a weekly section from one of the Gospels and then listen to them talk about it – what they see, questions raised, thoughts explored, implications pondered. It’s a great way to end the week – or to start the new one: spending some time with the Gospels and some honest talk about the Greatest Story Ever Told.

Welcome to Still Waters... 

This week’s reading from the Gospels:

4:3 Next Jesus was taken into the wild by the Spirit for the Test. The Devil was ready to give it. Jesus prepared for the Test by fasting forty days and forty nights. That left him, of course, in a state of extreme hunger, which the Devil took advantage of in the first test: “Since you are God’s Son, speak the word that will turn these stones into loaves of bread.”

4 Jesus answered by quoting Deuteronomy: “It takes more than bread to stay alive. It takes a steady stream of words from God’s mouth.”

5-6 For the second test the Devil took him to the Holy City. He sat him on top of the Temple and said, “Since you are God’s Son, jump.” The Devil goaded him by quoting Psalm 91: “He has placed you in the care of angels. They will catch you so that you won’t so much as stub your toe on a stone.”

7 Jesus countered with another citation from Deuteronomy: “Don’t you dare test the Lord your God.”

8-9 For the third test, the Devil took him to the peak of a huge mountain. He gestured expansively, pointing out all the earth’s kingdoms, how glorious they all were. Then he said, “They’re yours—lock, stock, and barrel. Just go down on your knees and worship me, and they’re yours.”
Jesus’ refusal was curt: “Beat it, Satan!” He backed his rebuke with a third quotation from Deuteronomy: “Worship the Lord your God, and only him. Serve him with absolute single-heartedness.”

The Test was over. The Devil left. And in his place, angels! Angels came and took care of Jesus’ needs.

* Matthew 4.1-11 from the Message; each week we are following the reading path (the lectionary) embraced by much of Christendom across denominational lines; what you are hearing is what believers around the world are hearing together. You can find the weekly readings by visiting lectionary.com